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7 July 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, Career Council

SUBJECT : Agency Policy on Length of Overseas Tours of Duty.

1. During my recent trip to certain European Stations and Bases I was very much impressed with the desirability of standardizing as much as possible the policies and procedures of the various Career Services. Under our present arrangement people working side by side in the field but belonging to different Career Services may be governed by entirely different policies and procedures. Of course the several Career Services have different requirements to meet and should have considerable flexibility; however, I think that we could standardize them more than we do at the present time.

2. One arrangement with which I believe we could start is that concerning the length of overseas tours of duty. While some Career Services have in the past adhered rather strictly to a two-year tour of duty in order to insure that the maximum number of key people received the benefit of overseas service, this objective has been largely accomplished. In consideration of the fact that at least some weeks are required after an employee reaches his overseas post before he is able to assume full responsibility and that his last few weeks prior to departure for the States are used in part to phase out, a two-year tour is not economical. Consequently, I believe that in most instances the best interests of the Agency would be served by having employees either extend for a third year or come to the States on home leave and return to their posts for a second two-year tour of duty. On the other hand, I believe that it is basically sound to make initial assignments for a two-year tour of duty in order to provide the flexibility to both the Agency and the employee if for any reason at all it appears desirable to limit the tour of duty to two years. Accordingly, I should like to propose that the following be adopted as Agency policy:

a. Except for posts where, for hardship or other special reasons, a tour shorter than two years has been adopted, personnel be assigned to overseas posts initially for two-year tours of duty.

b. Sometime after the completion of one year and prior to the completion of fifteen months of overseas duty a decision be made by the

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Head of the Career Service as to whether -

- (1) the employee returns home on a permanent-change-of-station basis at the end of the two-year tour,
- (2) extends for a third year, or
- (3) takes home leave and returns to his post for a second two-year tour of duty.

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